

where his career began, in the mountains of Preston County.

The first images he captured were the breathtaking beauty of the countryside. Soon he focused his lens on the people. He gave farm families pictures of their children in exchange for vegetables from their gardens.

One day Eleanor Roosevelt stopped in Aurora for lunch. She was on a trip to Arthurdale, a New Deal Homestead community that she had taken under her wing. The First Lady bought a few of the postcards Volkmar had made. The real profit was not the price she paid, rather, it was the encouragement that Volkmar felt.

He was inspired to come back to Washington to pursue a professional career, and what an amazing career it has been.

I am sure that many of my colleagues have been dazzled by his book, "Washington by Night." It gives a dramatically different view of the city's best known landmarks. Even today, more than 60 years after he captured those images, they still enhance our sense of wonder.

The same is certainly true of Volkmar's long and distinguished career with the National Geographic. From the Himalayas to Newfoundland, his work gave us rich new perspectives, and new understanding, of the world around us. And that is what makes him such a compelling artist. His keen eye, his technical skill, his respectful nature, his gracious manner, all of these things are evident in every photograph he takes.

Of course I have a special affinity for his award-winning work in West Virginia, and I am always proud to tell people that Volkmar and his wife, Viola, consider Aurora to be their home and are active in the local historical society.

The Wentzels recently celebrated his 90th birthday at their Washington residence. Tomorrow's reception will allow his friends and admirers to mark the happy occasion and to salute the work of this outstanding talent and true gentleman.

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBERS AS COSPONSORS OF H.R. 227

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), and the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) be removed as cosponsors of H.R. 227. I am the sponsor of H.R. 227, and their names were added in error.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

#### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to be able to join my colleagues who are here on the floor and will be presenting a Special Order in tribute to black history. I know my colleagues will begin an hour in just a few minutes, and I want to add to their offering this afternoon by sharing the importance of acknowledging this month with something a little bit different.

I am glad that through the calendar year we give an opportunity to be able to recognize the richness of the diversity of Americans. We are in fact a mosaic, not necessarily a melting pot, and we have many months to be able to honor so many different groups. And although this month has been designated as Black History Month, might I say that I look forward to the day that we stand as Americans and we are enriched by all of our cultures and that we respect them throughout the year, and that our classes throughout America are filled with anecdotal stories about all of the pioneers who came to this country, some of us quite differently.

I believe that Black History Month has been established primarily because, of course, the ancestors of those of us who are African Americans came first to this Nation in the bottom of the belly of a slave boat. But through that journey, that dark passage, we came to this Nation recognizing that its very tenets represented our ideals, and that is of opportunity, of sharing, of giving, of excellence.

So today I cite for our colleagues the importance of Black History Month, to be able to share those heroes. I may call a very limited list, because to call the whole roll would be enormous. I know they are familiar names, such as W. E. B. Dubois, George Washington Carver, or Sojourner Truth, the suffragette who may have been left unknown and unexpressed, but we know of her great emancipation work and her work on behalf of women, giving them the opportunity to work.

Harriet Tubman was known as General Moses, who helped to bring slaves through a free America. George White was the last African American to serve in the United States Congress in 1901 when he was redrawn out of this House through redistricting. He stood on the floor of the House and he said, "Like a phoenix, the Negro will rise."

General Chappie James during World War II showed himself to be a proud American, fighting against the forces of evil. The Tuskegee Airmen, which we honored just a few weeks ago. So many.

Then, of course, we bring ourselves to the civil rights movement. And who

does not know the name of Rosa Parks, someone who was willing to sit down and be counted against, again, the evil of segregation. We know the names of those like Martin Luther King, but do we know Josea Williams and Andrew Young? These are great icons.

And of course we know that so many of them brought us to the point where we could stand on this floor, Dorothy Height, who is with us today, her great leadership, and C. Dolores Tucker, both women who were pioneers and willing to take a chance.

Might I share, Mr. Speaker, some of the local heroes of Houston, Texas.

Jack Yates, who founded the Bethel Baptist Church, which suffered an enormous fire just a few weeks ago. How grateful I am that that community has come together and has stood together to say that history is important, not just for African Americans or Houstonians, but for all of us.

F. M. Williams. His father had a school named for him, M. C. Williams. We thank him for the spiritual leadership and being able to be concerned about education.

Christie Adair, Moses Leroy, Zollie Scales are all great heroes in our community who passed on, but Beulah Shepard, who remains in her early eighties, is someone who believed that just one single vote could make a difference, and went throughout the community registering people to vote and empowering them. She was a political leader. Unelected, but yet a leader in our community.

So many stand as heroes. Esther Williams. She was one of the early precinct judges and a dear friend. She was always in the political organizational aspect of our leadership, and she did it to open the doors for others.

Our first judges, like Henry Doyle; and certainly some of our attorneys, like attorney Plummer and attorney Whitcliff; or our early doctors, like John B. Coleman. So many. Dr. E. A. Lord and many others who have preceded the Perrys, Dr. and Mrs. Perry.

So I list these names not because they asked to be listed, but because this month is extremely important in recognizing the fulness of America and the diversity of America and our willingness to acknowledge them by this month. Let us always be reminded that our brilliance, our greatness is because we can stand under one flag, differently but yet united.

I go to my seat, Mr. Speaker, challenging the City of Houston and our school district, the Houston Independent School District, to cherish that history and ask and plead with them not to close Jack Yates High School, Kashmir High School, and Sam Houston High School because our history is so important.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, February is designated as Black History Month, and I want to take this opportunity to utilize this very practical observance, or practical designation.

The observances have very practical values. Some people have said they are useless and also they are insulting because our history goes on all the time. Why do we need to single it out for just one month? And if they are important, why only have one month?

Well, the way Americans do things, part of our culture and part of our way of life is we do highlight things, days of observances, holidays, special ceremonies, all these things are part of the way we capture people's attention.

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I am grateful for the fact that the whole month of February is designated as Black History Month. There was a time when there was no such designation, and there was a gentleman named Carter G. Woodson who resided here in Washington D.C. who worked for years to get a Black History Week designation.

The purpose for his Black History Week designation was a practical one. He wanted an opportunity to be able to highlight some of the achievements of African Americans over the years. So the fact now that television stations and corporations and various other people have pitched in and they pay homage to Black History Month is an achievement to be saluted. I congratulate the people who worked to have that done. It is for us, both black and white, to understand ways in which we can take advantage of the fact that this observance exists. You cannot separate American history from black history or black history from American history. The history of African Americans certainly is interwoven with the history of the United States of America in a way which can never be separated.

I would like to see us deal with black history as a continuum. The fact that people in small groups or individuals made contributions should not be played down. We are proud of the fact that you have a whole series of individual achievements that were highlighted when you start celebrating. We know that Thomas Edison had a black assistant who played a great role in what he did. Alexander Graham Bell. The inventor of the traffic light was a black man. Crispus Attucks was one of the first people to fall in the Boston Massacre. Crispus Attucks was a black man. There are a whole bevy of achievements that are saluted.

We often bring up the Tuskegee Airmen and how it took black groups highlighting the achievements of the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II before they were recognized nationally by the entire American public. They did not fly in a segregated war. They were escorts for bombers flying to Germany in World War II. They played a major role and should have been recognized right away, but that was not the case.

So the separate recognition and the efforts made by people to highlight their group achievements have been very important. Dorey Miller, who was one lone individual, needs to be celebrated and highlighted and maybe we will one day get an appropriate Congressional Medal of Honor for Dorey Miller. Dorey Miller happened to be a black man who was in the Navy, on one of the ships that was attacked on the day of the Pearl Harbor raid. Dorey Miller was a cook. He was not allowed to handle the guns at all. He had never been trained as a gunner and generally was forced to stay away from any kind of combat training. But on the day of Pearl Harbor, Dorey Miller shot down two Japanese planes standing on the deck of the Arizona, I think it was, with courage and skill fought back and deserves to be recognized. And on and on it goes in terms of highlighting individuals.

I think as we highlight individuals, we also should understand that the social and political and economic history is much more complicated and has to be part of what we discuss as we observe Black History Month in February. I would like to call the attention of the Members to the fact that the Public Broadcasting System, which is under attack right now for various reasons, from the left and the right, is not given the kind of acclaim they deserve for producing magnificent programs. The quality of their programming is really outstanding.

They did a series on slavery. That series ended last night. I saw the last part of it. It is a magnificent series that introduces a number of basic facts that most people have never known and others have forgotten. It also highlights the passion and the fervor of the struggle, the struggle on both sides, the struggle of the African slaves to get free in this country and the struggle and fervor of the people on the other side who wanted them very much to never be free because they were property earning great profits. The magnitude of those profits earned by slave labor was discussed at great length.

Everybody in this country needs to understand the role of slave labor in the building of the wealth of America. They need to understand it was not just the South but New York City was one of the biggest, it was the second or third largest port where slaves came into the country. They need to under-

stand that although cotton was king and very profitable, it was profitable not only for the people who grew the cotton in the South but the mills in New England and in the North that made textiles also profited greatly from the slave labor that produced the cotton that they made into textiles. That piece of economic history is very important to understand and comprehend.

People dismiss and consider it an insult when certain groups of African Americans say that we do reparations. Reparations is not a silly idea. Reparations ought to be considered because of the fact that so much slave labor, free labor, labor taken with no compensation, went into the building of this Nation, that there ought to be some consideration in some way. I will not go into any great detail at this point, but this Capitol was built by slaves. This Capitol was built by slaves. Only recently have they discovered documents which certainly make it quite clear that slave labor built the Capitol. They have the actual records of how they contracted with the masters of the slaves and paid them, I think, \$5 a week or something for their slaves to work. You can document it if you are interested in seeing it in greater detail and if you doubt that that is the truth, but the Capitol was built by slave labor and much of Washington and much of the east coast, I assure you, in the early days, before the Civil War, was built with slave labor as well.

We have an African-American museum that is about to be undertaken here in Washington with the support of our government. It is going to be a museum which brings all this together. We have achieved, finally, the American Indian museum on the Mall that opened, I think, last year. That American Indian museum pays proper homage to the original Americans who were here when the explorers from Europe came. I think that is very important. But proper homage has not been paid to the Africans who helped to build this Nation, who were not here when the Europeans came, who did not come voluntarily as immigrants, but who came here kidnapped and in chains, but nevertheless their labor helped to build America.

That African-American museum is going to be a part of the Smithsonian Institute. That African-American museum will be partially financed by the Federal Government and partially financed by private funds, I think like the museum of the Holocaust, partially paid for with private funds and some government funds.

The African-American museum is a great opportunity to accomplish what I was talking about before in terms of the continuum, showing in a continuation the economic, social, and political development of black life in America and what the impact of African-